

A COLONY OF *ANASIMYIA INTERPUNCTA* HARRIS (DIPT.: SYRPHIDAE) ON THE THAMES MARSHES

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This hoverfly, only lately (1980) separated off from *A. lunulata* Mg., was brought to the attention of British dipterists by Mr. A. E. Stubbs in the following year. So far it is one of the least-known of our Syrphidae, and apparently much the rarer of the two species although *lunulata* is anything but common. Confirmed British records of *interpuncta* appear to be four only to date: Wicken Fen, Cambs. (a few examples); Woodwalton Fen, Hunts. (1 ex.); Boston Manor, Middx. (2 exx.) — these given in full by Stubbs (1981:11), who later adds a Norfolk record (Stubbs & Falk, 1983). Further, it seems that the species was taken in West Kent many years ago, since Chandler (1969) gives two 19th-century records under *A. lunulata*: Old Charlton and Plumstead Marshes. However, *A. interpuncta* had not then been split off, and it is clear from what we now know that these two Kent records must almost certainly be referred to that species, instead of the bog-loving *lunulata* which is probably not Kentish.

On 14th June, 1984, on the Erith Marshes near Slade Green in N. W. Kent, I caught a male *Anasimyia* on a buttercup flower not far from a drainage dike, which (to my great satisfaction) was seen to be a member of the above species-pair. In the course of the afternoon three further specimens were secured: one in the same way and two swept from dikeside herbage, making a total of 3♂♂ and 1♀. As expected, a careful study of the flies with the above works placed their identity beyond doubt as *A. interpuncta*. Returning to the site on the 21st I found the species not uncommon, still with males predominating, and accompanied this time by a pair of the far more familiar *A. lineata* F. — nearly all at buttercups. This was indeed a curious reversal of expectation, and something quite new in the hitherto fragmentary British experience of the rare *A. interpuncta*. However, all but one (♀) of the eleven examples captured on this second occasion had the wings frayed. The flies still seemed confined to a limited area, but some occurred as much as 15 yards or so out into the field from the dike. Associated Syrphids were *Chrysogaster hirtella* Lw. and *Eristalis sepulchralis* L. in plenty, others fewer.

Not the least unexpected feature of the occurrence relates to flight-period. All the few previous records are for May, *interpuncta* being thus considered an early species; but here we have it flying in fresh condition but low numbers in mid-June, and only a week later in worn condition but much higher numbers. This poses questions,

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and may necessitate a revision of our estimate of its flight-period, which on present evidence would seem to extend to the end of June if not later. (The worn females caught would presumably have already bred.) The allies of *interpuncta* usually last into August or September; does this indicate a second brood or a protracted emergence-period? Further investigation of the Erith Marshes colony is obviously desirable.

Stubbs & Falk (p. 191) point out that because so little material is at present available, the degree of variation in this hoverfly is not yet known. The 14 specimens before me vary only to a trivial extent, and scarcely at all in the critical character of the outer hinder corners of the pale abdominal markings; except that in one those on tergite 2 are less clearly drawn away from the edge at the corner than in the others, much as in *A. lunulata*; however, the markings of the other tergites are typical of *interpuncta*. There is good agreement throughout with Stubbs & Falk's figures. The yellow thoracic stripes are much wider in the females than in the males, in places as wide as and wider than the black stripes between them. In *A. lineata*, for instance, this is not clearly the case.

References

- Chandler, P. J. 1969. The Hoverflies of Kent. *Trans. Kent Field Club* 3(3): 190.
- Stubbs, A. E. 1981. *Anasimyia contracta* Torp & Claussen, 1980 and *A. interpuncta* (Harris 1776) (Diptera: Syrphidae) in Britain. *Proc. Trans. Br. ent. nat. Hist. Soc.* 14: 10-11, with figs.
- Stubbs, A. E. & Falk, S. J. 1983. *British Hoverflies*. 190 (figs.), 191, Pl. 12 figs. 8a, 8b. London.

THE PAINTED LADY: *CYNTHIA CARDUI* IN FEBRUARY 1985. — Whilst walking along a roadside path on the Berks/Hants border near Tadley, Hants on February 6th, a mild day between two cold spells, I observed flying in my direction a *C. cardui*. — P. G. SILVER, 11 Scott Close, Emmer Green, Reading, Berks.

PARADIARZIA GLAREOSA ESP. SSP. EDDA STAUD.: AUTUMNAL RUSTIC IN CARDIGANSHIRE. — A single specimen of this unusual variety of *P. glareosa* was taken in a Rothamsted light trap at Tregaron during the night of 31st August 1984. This variety is normally associated with Shetland although it is reported that forms approaching *edda* have recently been taken in Orkney (Heath & Emmet, 1979, *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland*). The captured specimen is in fine condition, with a uniform, almost black ground colour and with the cross lines and stigmata clearly outlined in a pale buff. My thanks to Mr. David Carter (British Museum, Nat. Hist.) for confirming the identification. — I. J. TILLOTSON, Tyloed, Tregaron, Dyfed, SY25 6JF.